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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5606
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
ALL NATO CAPITALS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NATO 08345

BELGRADE FOR CSCE DEL

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: CSCE, NATO
SUBJECT: CSCE: POLAD DISCUSSION OF OUTCOME OF BELGRADE PREPARATORY MEETING

REFS: (A) NATO 8153, (B) STATE 199612, (C) BELGRADE 5317
1. AT AUGUST 30 POLADS MEETING, IS EXPERT WELCOMED PAPER WE CIRCULATED ON IMPLICATIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL MODALITIES FOR WORK OF MAIN MEETING (DRAWN FROM REF C) AND SUGGESTED IT BE BASIS FOR DISCUSSION OF THIS QUESTION AT SEPTEMBER 7 EXPERTS MEETING.

2. DISCUSSION OF THE PREPARATORY MEETING BY OTHERS PRODUCED LITTLE IN THE WAY OF NEW INSIGHTS. ALL EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE OUTCOME. FRENCH REP, COMMENTING ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE POLES, HUNGARIANS, AND PARTICULARLY THE ROMANIANS, SAID THE WP COUNTRIES APPEARED NOT TO HAVE CONSERTED THEIR APPROACH IN ADVANCE. UK REP STRONGLY DISAGREED, SAID THE POLES WERE ACTING FOR THE SOVIETS, AND STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF ALLIED COORDINATION AND SOLIDARITY FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS IN CSCE.
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NETHERLANDS REP ALSO SPOKE ON BENEFITS OF ALLIED SOLIDARITY. TURKISH REP SAID HIS AUTHORITIES DISAGREED WITH THE "VIEW" (WHICH HE PRIVATELY ASCRIBED TO THE FRENCH) THAT THE NATO PROPOSAL INTRODUCED BY THE US AND UK AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PREPARATORY MEETING WAS NOT ADOPTED BECAUSE OF US COSPONSORSHIP. HOWEVER, LOOKING AHEAD, TURKS BELIEVE THAT HOW NEW WESTERN PROPOSALS ARE PRESENTED

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AT BELGRADE WILL BE ALMOST AS IMPORTANT AS THEIR SUBSTANCE.
CANADIAN REP SAID HIS AUTHORITIES WERE IMPRESSED BY THE
COHESION AND AGGRESSIVENESS OF THE NNAS, THEIR LEADER-
SHIP FUNCTION, AND THE TOUGH INFIGHTING AMONG THEM.

3. FRG REP HAS CIRCULATED FOLLOWING PAPER ON SOVIET
ATTITUDES.
BEGIN TEXT:

1. IN CONTRAST TO THE USUAL PRACTICE TO PROVIDE A
RUNNING COMMENTARY ON CONFERENCES WITH SOVIET PARTI-
CIPATION, THE SOVIET PRESS REFRAINED ALMOST COMPLETELY
FROM MAKING STATEMENTS IN THE COURSE OF THE PREPARATORY
MEETING, WHILE, AT THE SAME TIME, COMMENTS ON CSCE
QUESTIONS AND PRONOUNCEMENTS BY SOVIET POLITICIANS
WERE PUBLISHED IN WHICH IT WAS TAKEN FOR GRANTED THAT
THE BELGRADE FOLLOW-UP MEETING WOULD TAKE PLACE.

2. AS FAR AS THE SOVIET UNION IS CONCERNED, THE
FOLLOWING RESULT OF THE BELGRADE PREPARATORY MEETING
WOULD HAVE BEEN IDEAL:

- A FIRM DURATION OF THE BELGRADE MAIN MEETING. THIS
WOULD HAVE PUT A LIMIT ON THE TIME FOR THE DETAILED
IMPLEMENTATION DEBATE WHICH THE SOVIET UNION WISHES
TO PREVENT AS FAR AS POSSIBLE AND WOULD HAVE CREATED
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PRESSURE OF TIME FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE FINAL DOCUMENT;

- PLENARY MEETINGS AS THE ONLY FORM OF MEETING AT THE
BELGRADE MAIN CONFERENCE;
IF THIS HAD BEEN AGREED, THE SOVIET UNION COULD HAVE
LARGELY USED THE BELGRADE FOLLOW-UP MEETING AS A FORUM
FOR ITS OWN RHETORIC SELF-PRESENTATION AND COULD HAVE
DE-EMPHASIZED THE CHARACTER OF THE CONFERENCE AS A
WORKING MEETING;

- NO DETERMINATION OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE EXCHANGE
OF VIEWS. THE SOVIET UNION WOULD IN THIS CASE HAVE
FOUND IT EASIER TO ENFORCE ITS INTERPRETATION OF THE
BELGRADE FOLLOW-UP MEETING AS AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS
ON NEW IMPULSES FOR THE EUROPEAN PROCESS OF DETENTE,
IMPULSES WHICH POINT TOWARDS THE FUTURE AND GIVE A
CONCRETE MEANING TO THE "SPIRIT OF HELSINKI".

3. NEVERTHELESS, THE FIRST SOVIET COMMENTS ASSESS THE
RESULT OF THE BELGRADE PREPARATORY MEETING AS POSITIVE
AND AS REPRESENTING A "BALANCE OF THE INTERESTS OF
BOTH SIDES". THIS IS LIKELY TO BE DUE NOT ONLY TO

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THE FACT THAT THE SOVIET MASS MEDIA HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED
TO PLACE A POSITIVE ASSESSMENT ON THE RESULTS OF THE
SOVIET CONFERENCE DIPLOMACY. THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP
APPARENTLY REGARDS THE LANGUAGE CHOSEN FOR THE - TO IT -
ESSENTIAL PROVISIONS OF THE FINAL DOCUMENT ON THE DURATION
OF THE CONFERENCE, THE CONFERENCE BODIES AND THE
STRUCTURE OF THE AGENDA AS POSSIBILITIES FOR PLACING
GREATER EMPHASIS ON ITS OWN INTERESTS ALSO DURING
THE MAIN CONFERENCE. THUS, SOVIET COMMENTS EXPLICITLY
POINT OUT THAT THE SOVIET DELEGATION HAD BEEN ABLE

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TO PREVENT WESTERN EFFORTS FOR A PRE-PROGRAMMING OF
THE MAIN CONFERENCE IN A MANNER WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN
IN CONFLICT WITH THE "SPIRIT OF HELSINKI".

4. THE COMMENTS SO FAR PUBLISHED IN THE SOVIET
PRESS REVEAL A TENDENCY TO INTERPRET THE PROVISIONS
OF THE FINAL DOCUMENT CONCERNING THE CONFERENCE
DURATION IN SUCH A MANNER AS IF FIRM DATES FOR THE
CONCLUSION OF THE CONFERENCE HAD BEEN DECIDED:
MOSCOW REFERS TO 22 DECEMBER AS THE CLOSING DATE OF
THE MAIN CONFERENCE, WHILE THE AGREEMENT ON A POSSIBLE
CONTINUATION OF THE CONFERENCE IS ONLY MENTIONED IN
PASSING. WHILE NOT OMITTING THE POSSIBILITY OF
CONTINUING THE CONFERENCE, THE SOVIET PRESS IS TRYING
TO CREATE THE IMPRESSION THAT IT HAD BEEN FIRMLY
AGREED TO END THE CONFERENCE NOT LATER THAN IN
MID-FEBRUARY 1978 AND THAT A CONSENSUS ON THE ADOPTION
OF A FINAL DOCUMENT HAD TO BE REACHED BY THEN. BY
GIVING A ONE-SIDED INTERPRETATION TO PARA. 13 OF THE

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FINAL DOCUMENT, THE SOVIET UNION APPARENTLY SEES A POSSIBILITY AGAIN TO CREATE PRESSURE OF TIME AND THUS TO OBLIGE ALL PARTICIPANTS TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT.

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5. IT IS ALSO NOTEWORTHY THAT THE SOVIET PRESS CLEARLY ASSIGNS A LOWER STATUS TO THE WORKING GROUPS COMPARED WITH THE PLENARY MEETINGS AND ESPECIALLY CALLS ATTENTION TO THE LIMITED DURATION OF THE MEETINGS OF THE WORKING GROUPS. IT CANNOT BE RULED OUT, THEREFORE, THAT MOSCOW INTENDS TO INTERPRET THE CORRESPONDING PROVISIONS OF THE FINAL DOCUMENT IN SUCH A MANNER THAT THE PLENARY CONTRIBUTIONS ARE REGARDED AS THE ACTUAL RESULT OF THE MAIN CONFERENCE.

6. FINALLY, THE SOVIET UNION MIGHT REGARD THE LANGUAGE CHOSEN FOR PARA. 4 OF THE FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE PREPARATORY CONFERENCE AS PROVIDING A POSSIBILITY TO BLUR THE INTENDED SEPARATION BETWEEN THE DRAWING-UP OF A BALANCE SHEET AND THE DISCUSSION OF FUTURE PROSPECTS AND TO TRY TO ENFORCE THE SOVIET CONFERENCE CONCEPT, IF ONLY IN PARTS, AND TO REDUCE THE IMPLEMENTATION DISCUSSION.

7. AS FAR AS THE SOVIET INTERESTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE BELGRADE MAIN MEETING ARE CONCERNED, THE SOVIET UNION WILL TRY TO PLACE THOSE ASPECTS WHICH ARE, IN SOVIET EYES, FUTURE-ORIENTED - LIKE MR. BREZHNEV'S PROPOSALS ON CONFERENCES ON THE ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND TRANSPORT, THE NON-FIRST USE PROPOSAL BY THE WARSAW PACT OF NOVEMBER 1976 AND FURTHER SOVIET DISARMAMENT INITIATIVES - INTO THE FOREGROUND AND TO ATTACK ANY ATTEMPT TO DRAW UP A BALANCE SHEET SINCE HELSINKI AS UNCONSTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOUR.

8. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION DEBATE, THE SOVIET UNION WILL TRY TO EVADE THE DISCUSSION OF INDIVIDUAL PRO-VISIONS OF THE CSCE FINAL ACT BY REFERRING TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

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FINAL ACT IN ITS TOTALITY, COMPARED WITH WHICH INDIVIDUAL PARTS WERE OF LESSER IMPORTANCE. "IMPLEMEN-TATION OF THE FINAL ACT" MEANS TO THE SOVIET UNION THAT THE DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY OF THE PARTICIPATING STATES SHOULD BASICALLY BE ORIENTATED TOWARDS THE

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SPIRIT OF HELSINKI. THE SOVIET UNION WILL CLAIM
THAT IT HAS DONE SO AND WILL, BY WAY OF EXAMPLE,
CALL ATTENTION TO THE DRAFT OF THE NEW SOVIET CONSTITUTION
AND THE SOVIET CONTRACTUAL POLICY VIS-A-VIS THE WEST.

9. IN REPLY TO WESTERN REMINDERS CONCERNING THE
NON-FULFILMENT OF INDIVIDUAL PROVISIONS OF THE FINAL
ACT, THE SOVIET UNION WILL LAUNCH A POLEMIC AGAINST
INADEQUACIES OF THE WESTERN SOCIAL SYSTEM. AN IMPORTANT
ELEMENT OF THE SOVIET DEFENSIVE ARGUMENTATION IS
ALSO LIKELY TO BE THE CHARGE ADDRESSED TO THE WEST
THAT IT WAS ACCELERATING ARMS RACE BY THE DEVELOPMENT
OF NEW WEAPON SYSTEMS (CRUISE MISSILES, NEUTRON BOMB).

10. THE SOVIET UNION WILL ALSO TRY TO PRESENT THE
BELGRADE MAIN MEETING AS A TEST CASE FOR THE WESTERN
DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE THE DETENTE DIALOGUE, ESPECIALLY
AS FAR AS SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS ARECONCERNED, AND
TO EVADE CONTROVERSIAL DISCUSSIONS BY WARNING AGAINST
A COOLING-OFF OF THE EAST-WEST RELATIONSHIP.

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